

# Mountain Partners in Agriculture

Sustaining Farms and Rural Communities

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May 13, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)  
Food and Drug Administration  
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061  
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Reference: Docket Number 98N-1038

Dear FDA,

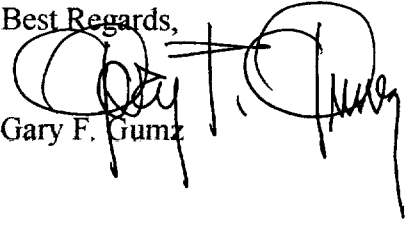
This letter is in support of more prominent and permanent labeling of irradiated foods. Foods need to be labeled with regard to processes involved with their production and treatment. These labels need to be prominent and need to continue as long as the processes, so involved, continue. These labels need provide basic information and need not convey a sense of warning. Provide basic information and let consumers decide.

Prominent labeling is important and necessary so that a consumer can make informed and deliberate purchasing and handling decisions. Unless there is uniform required prominent labeling of irradiated food, consumers and retailers would not have a way to distinguish unlabeled irradiated food and unlabeled non-irradiated food. Without labeling of irradiated food, consumers could mistakenly think they are purchasing irradiated food and therefore not take necessary sanitary precautions in handling, storage and preparation. This could lead to illness and death, because they thought food was treated, when in fact it wasn't.

The easiest way to avoid confusion is for proper and prominent labeling.

Best Regards,

Gary F. Gumz



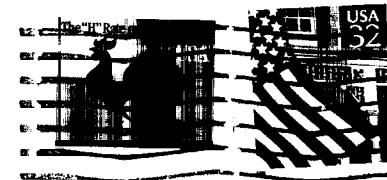
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98N 1038

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